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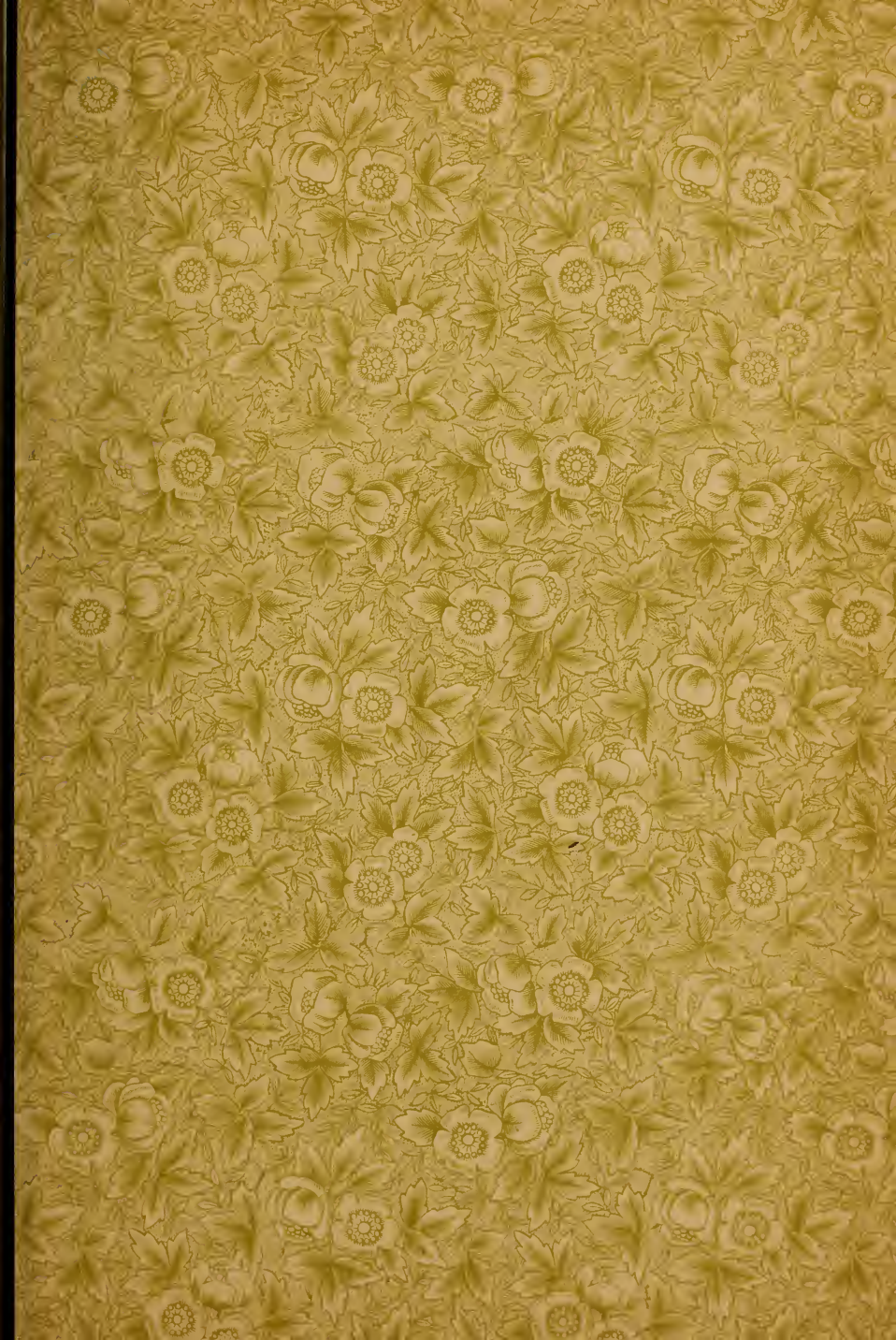
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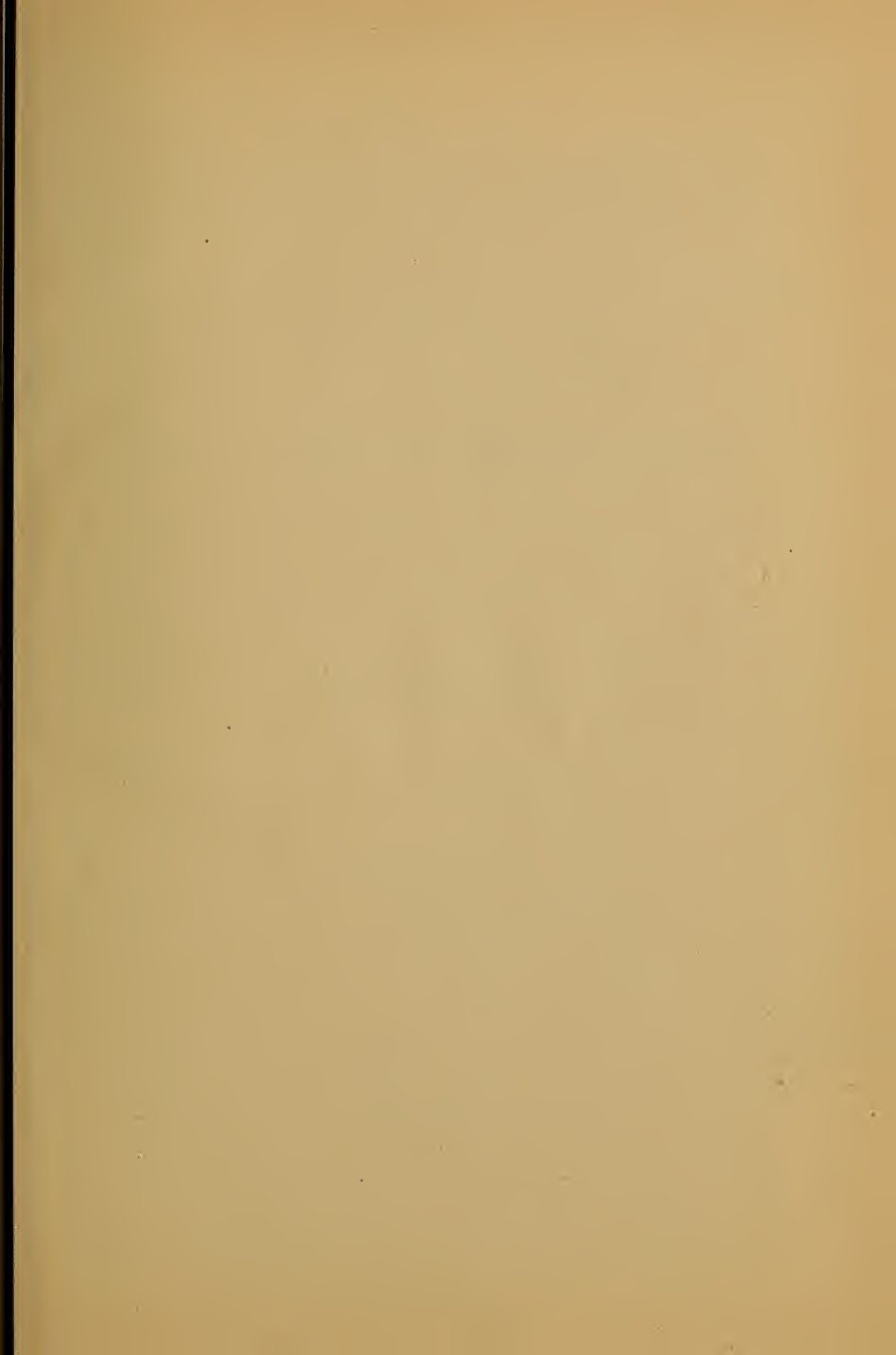
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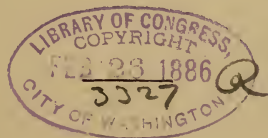
OR,

Light From the Shadow Land.

✓
M. KARL.

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*Note at end
referred to
P. Miner
who may
be the author*

CHICAGO:

1886.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE DEAR PUBLIC.

HAVING cracked a few nuts for you I shall not proceed to pick out the kernels. That some will find them bitter to the taste I have no doubt—there is nothing that makes a thing seem so unsavory as prejudice.

But that there are others to whom they will be full of sweetness and nutrition I hope and believe.

If one soul is sustained, one heart gladdened, one life lived purer and truer, because of a perusal of these pages, my task is accomplished. I have my reward.

With love to all who are sad, and sympathy for all who suffer, from whatever cause, I recommend each one to the unswerving love of "Him who doeth all things well."

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM an honest churchman. I make this assertion in the beginning, that it may stand out so boldly and clearly in the reader's mind that there may never be any doubt as to *my* position, whatever of doubt or mystery the perusal of the following pages may call forth.

Tom Jeffreys is my old classmate. I do not approve of him. I never have. He is a roaming sort of an artist, sure to turn up in all sorts of odd times and places and with no apparent object in life save to enjoy it. Not that he is immoral. To the contrary, it has always been a puzzle to me how a man holding his peculiar views should be able to live a wandering, old bachelor's life, with a pure character and no bad habit, save the detestable one of smoking. For Tom is an "Agnostic."

He says it, and defends his position coolly and decidedly under my very nose. He even affirms his position to be more logical and sensible than my own Faith.

He maddens me at times, does Tom. And were it not that I know him to be thoroughly sincere and honest, in spite of his wicked unbelief, I would long ago have had nothing more to do with him. But a man so

truthful and kind-hearted as he I have always cherished a hope of converting, at last, to the true Faith.

And the best proof of some unusual merit in the following articles, is, to my mind, in the fact that they have evidently made an impression on Tom, for he sent an exquisitely carved font to our church recently from no one knows where. After a careful perusal of the articles I have found nothing contained 'in them directly opposed to the Apostles' Creed, and several things quite consistent with the teachings of the church, therefore, since Mrs. M. is a churchwoman, and accepts the sacraments, I presume she is a very good woman, indeed, in spite of her abnormal and unaccountable peculiarity of "hearing voices," and hope her prayers may always keep the evil one from her. Still it seems to me very dangerous to subject one's self thus to an unknown influence; and for myself, I should scrupulously avoid all such ways, deeming the Bible alone "sufficient unto salvation" as taught by the fathers.

Yet these articles, lying upon my hands, have been an ever-increasing burden of care to me; and for the sake of those who are stumbling away from God, like poor Tom Jeffreys, I have concluded to give them to the public, trusting that when any averted faces are turned, by this or any other influence, toward the light, they may gradually and surely be led to perceive the "True light which lighteth the whole world."

If any condemn my course in this I recommend him to that Charity which should be cherished toward all men.

The subjoined letter from Tom, and following articles, are just as I received them from him by mail with much astonishment one morning not quite a year ago.

M. KARL.

TOM JEFFREYS' LETTER.

MY DEAR FELLOW,—I send you herewith a bundle of manuscript, which seems to be more in your line than in my own, although I confess it has given me some new thoughts and queer sensations.

To tell you all the particulars of how it fell into my hands would require too much time and (you know my habits) effort.

Suffice to say a woman is in it; a woman is in most of the perplexities of this world, where, although we concentrate all our energies upon finding, after awhile, a soft spot for ourselves, the one soft spot that any man finds is at last in his little seven feet of earth!

Yet if all that you will find in this manuscript could be true—but pshaw! where is the proof?—no doubt the woman is crazy; although in all other matters she is sound as a nut, and as sensible a little woman as ever it has been my luck to know.

I met her when I was stopping at a hotel in D—, a nice little city in Iowa. She was boarding there with her husband (a good fellow) and child. We all became quite friendly in a general way, and had several interesting conversations on the veranda after supper in the pleasant summer evenings.

She *is* a sensible woman—no objections to a cigar

and all that sort of a thing, you know,—husband smokes.

One evening we got to talking about a lot of spiritualists that were having a powwow of their own in the town, with ghosts, and table-walkings, and no end of queer doings—one medium woman thrusting her face repeatedly into the flame of a lamp without being burned. (Some acid on it, probably, though they said not.) Well, Mrs. M. (she objects to having her name given) expressed herself quite strongly as opposed to “modern spiritualism,” because of the immorality and license which many of the class who sail under that name allow themselves, claiming their own personal desires and instincts to be superior to all Christian teachings; yet are tolerated, together with barefaced fraud, by others in the ranks whose own lives are pure.

I rather took the side of the independent thinkers, claiming a man is justified who honestly acts a conviction, no matter what that conviction may be; though of course I believe their magnetism and clairvoyance and mediumship all bosh!—all to be explained by natural causes if they were understood.

Judge of my surprise next morning when Mrs. M. gravely handed me an article purporting to be through “inspirational writing.” She claims to have “heard voices” since her childhood; that “the voice” has always helped her toward all things good and admonished her when wrong. Her husband bears out her assertions, but is unwilling her name should be made public.

She says that lately she has been able to write what

she hears; that it is said to her slowly as one would speak waiting for another to write. She invited me to ask any questions that I would, saying she would ask for an answer and get it if she could. She says she always prays before asking a question, to keep influences that are not holy and pure and of Christ away from her.

The manuscript I send is the result of questions which I asked, and she answered, from time to time.

I am on the eve of flight to other lands.

Hoping you will be able to make more out of this than I can, I remain, your affectionate friend,

TOM JEFFREYS.

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ARTICLE I.

QUESTION.

How are what are termed Fire Mediums able to handle fire without being burned?

ANSWER.

IT is the correlation of forces. Spirit is a force. Matter is a force. Both are expressions of life.

The dominant force is always the native force. But the spirit force is the intelligent force; that which thinks, reasons, observes, reflects. It is the will force which governs the matter force.

Now if enough will power, or force, be concentrated upon any part of a medium it can overcome the native action of matter—for it is a superior or ruling force.

Fire is one natural action of the force matter, and to be burned, or changed in form by fire, is a corresponding action of matter.

But fire, and the action of fire, is a delegated force as differencing from a superior force—a force caused and perpetuated by intelligent force.

Now for the face or hands of a medium to be burned by a flame is, of course, a very small action of a very great force, or possibility, as it exists in nature.

Do you not see that if the intelligent force of the *will*, concentrated upon that small point of action of a delegated or native force, be superior in power to the power of the native force which perpetuates continually its equilibrium, it cannot act? (A native force may be stated to be that action which will always, under like conditions, produce like results.)

The natural action of the fire upon the flesh is suspended—held in check—by action of *will* exerted through the flesh: not the will of the medium, but the will of the combined intelligences acting through her. If she were afraid, or had no faith in their power—believed it would burn in spite of their efforts—their will could not act; her will would be antagonistic to theirs, and render her an active instead of a passive agent; and probably enough will force could not be concentrated to make power enough to overcome both her mental force and the native action of the flame.

Hence it is obvious why a jar, any sudden or startling action of the audience, might cause her to be burned: it would cause her mental force to resume its normal active condition, and her passive receptibility would be destroyed. Thus the will power acting upon her would be interfered with, for it was acting *through her* as an agent, a conveyance.

It is the same principle as that an iron ring may have its adhesion of particles temporarily destroyed to join it within another iron ring. Only the iron ring is the easier thing to do, because it contains no spirit force, or intelligence, to be rendered passive, or that

may interfere with the performance through the action of outside influences.

You will understand by the comparison to the ring that I do not mean the flame was made incapable of burning something else, but merely unable to burn that portion of the medium's body protected by the will power of those acting through her ; because those particles of her body rendered temporarily non-combustible by will force concentrated there.

I do not think the terms magnetism or electricity so well explain the philosophy as will force.

Of course the will acts through the media of electricity or magnetism as it ever does—but neither magnetism nor electricity is the directing power ; and the force which I have called *will*, which is the intelligence in every individual, is the *first cause*, hence the moving, acting power.

I think a sufficient answer to the theory that the controls coated their medium's face or hands with a covering of magnetism or electricity is in the fact that a magnet itself may be burned by fire until it lose its magnetic power ; that any most highly electrized machine may be burned when so electrized. More : electricity itself may burn.

It must be a force superior to this that can prevent the natural action of fire upon an object.

Perhaps the controls themselves may not have known how they did it—that is, the philosophy of it. Or they may have known that magnetism and electricity are conveyances of will force, and have attributed to the carriage the moving power of the horse !

To resume : The intelligence or will which promotes and permits all the actions of the forces of matter, according to laws, is a diffused force, just sufficient to keep the matter forces in motion. Or, matter has delegated for its use just sufficient power to fulfill its own laws. Hence a concentration of sufficient will power at any given point may break through this round of material action. It is thus that God may upon occasion act without, or seemingly contrary to, the very laws of his material universe, yet *in accordance* with another *superior* law which he has ordained. And his more advanced children, as they learn of this superior law, are permitted to use the same according to their own possibilities, which is according to their knowledge. No restrictions are put upon intelligences save law. As knowledge of law is acquired, *will force* may act according to law.

ARTICLE II.

QUESTION.

Why do spirits, when controlling a medium, so frequently compel the medium to "take on" the feelings and sufferings which THEY last experienced in THEIR former earth form?

ANSWER.

WHAT *you* term matter is only one of the *forms* in which spirit—or better, the principle of life—manifests itself. It is the most *real* of all forms to you who dwell in the realms of such manifestations, of course, because the most tangible—because, in short, it is that of which you are a part, a fraction, a unit. When you escape from that form to one more condensed, refined, you may wonder how anything so coarse, thin, vapory as what you call matter could seem solid, tangible, real!

I am aware that I am reversing terms to your mind—you wonder that I apply the word condensed to anything so diffusive as you have regarded spirit. Well, it is your misapprehension, and a common one. (As good an illustration as I can give to your mind, perhaps, is, that evolving the form *spirit* from the form *matter* is something like separating gold from the

quartz, etc., in which it is embedded; when you once have it fine and perfect gold, how much more solid, condensed, than when mingled in the hard ore with the flint and quartz; more solid because more condensed. It can be drawn out, spread, molded, as the coarse, brittle quartz will not endure. It is more pliable, certainly; but pliability suggests density in its very action.)

Now as regards your question: Why do spirits, when controlling a medium, so frequently compel the medium to "take on" the feelings and sufferings which they last experienced in their former earth form?

It is nerve action! Simply this. It is not voluntary mental direction of the controlling agent at all: to the contrary, it is often as amazing—as *unexpected*, frequently, if one unused to control—to the director (or spirit, as you say) as it is distressing to the medium.

Sometimes it so embarrasses the control as to render it impossible to operate.

Not that the spirit *feels again* those pains and symptoms that the *medium feels* through *sympathetic nerve contact*, but he is embarrassed at the effect which he involuntarily produces by his contact, and which he may not understand.

Now you are wondering at the words "nerve action" and "sympathetic nerve contact," as applied to your idea of a spirit. Nerve action as applied to your earthly body would not surprise you at all, however.

Now why? What is nerve action? Do you know?

You know there are certain parts of the human body which are called the nerves, and you know that

these nerve lines flash their intelligences quicker than thought from all parts of the human frame to the brain.

But the science of their action you do not know any more than you know how your own brain acts.

Well, call this action electricity. (It is as good a term as any.) It is a transmitted action, is it not?

It is conveyed, passed along, from one part to another of your frame by contact of part to part—of “atom” to “atom.” If one of your limbs were dismembered, then cut or pinched, your brain would receive no intelligence of it by nerve action, not even if the dismembered limb were laid flesh to flesh upon your living body. Why? The little nerves that surgeons trace would still be traceable in that cut-off limb? Ah! do you begin to perceive the *spirit nerves* now?

The spirit limb cannot be cut off. Where the material limb is removed its nerve channels have lost the force which acted through them. But has the force ceased to act, to exist?

You cannot tell, with your obtuse, material sense, of course. But it has not; and its involuntary action is *suspended* just where it left off. (This is hard to explain to your understanding.) There is a sympathy, you would say, between the spirit and the body that it inhabits—it can feel the pains of the body, you would say. But the body of itself *has no pains!* This sympathy there is sympathetic nerve action—sympathetic spirit action of the nerves as directed by the perceptions, understanding, etc.

Now when the spirit is removed from the body of course such action of sympathy ceases; but the spirit nerves retain the impression that was last made upon them (just as you will remember your friend's face as you last saw it, and your mind will retain the memory till you again see it and a new impression eradicates the old) and when the spirit body is brought in contact again with another material body it transmits such impressions as it still retains upon the sympathetic nerves in the living flesh, as a picture is transmitted to the sensitive plate in the camera by the action of light.

Light! Electricity! the terms are synonymous; and electricity, nerve action, are two terms that may convey one idea,—not that nerve action conveys as much as electricity, however—it is merely an action of electricity. Electricity, like light, works on all, through all, over all: two effects from one cause.

“Why do these spirit nerves retain their impressions?” you ask. “Why do they not pass away as the spirit goes on living and exercising new functions in a new form of existence?”

That is precisely it: *because* it is a *new form of existence* through which the spirit nerves and perceptions now act.

Electricity acts according to the forms in which it is used, according to the channels through which it is conveyed.

The possibilities of the spirit are illimitable; those possibilities are utilized according to the forms through which it is manifested. The old possibilities of the

spirit nerves are no longer used or needed in the new form, hence they are suspended—dropped just where they were left off using, as a workman drops his tools in a shop where he leaves his task, and the tools remain as he left them till he or another workman picks them up; so with the spirit nerves, they are implements through which the spirit mind acts, and when that mind comes in contact—"en rapport"—with another mind in a mortal frame the mortal mind takes cognizance involuntarily of the situation of the workshop whose tools are about to operate upon his mortal state in place of his own native tools.

Because, of course, when a spirit comes back to control a mortal frame, or use a mortal brain, he must use the same spirit possibilities, or *tools*, that he used in earth life, not the same set of implements, the new possibilities that he now has use for in his spiritual existence.

After awhile, and as he uses these faculties through other organisms, these old conditions pass away—he changes the positions of his tools, I may say, as he uses them. The old picture upon his spirit nerves is obliterated, and as no new mortal impressions can be formed of pain or pleasure he ceases to impress any picture of mortality upon a medium, because the conditions cease to exist. Also, if he understand how, he may exert his *will* to overcome such effect upon the spirit nerves of the medium.

Or, after time enough, he may drop these old possibilities entirely by the acquisition of new ones.

A spirit thus advanced cannot control a medium to

give the bodily manifestations that one who retains the earth possibilities may do ; he cannot control a medium to unconsciousness without the help of intermediate spirits, who hold the functions or spirit nerves which control the body, while he operates the mind, the thought possibilities.

Ah ! how little can I make you understand of a subject so vast, so intricate.

* * * * *

ARTICLE III.

QUESTION.

What is Evolution?

ANSWER.

IT is spirit conception thrown off from the mind of God working upward, as the seed planted in the soil works out its possibilities toward reproducing the prototype of the plant from whence it came.

The ever-radiating possibilities from the All-pervading mind, constantly acting upon the forces, fixed and fastened by immutable laws, must yet, like all things else in the universe, be subject to the law.

Having foreseen and ordained laws sufficient to control all that is, the Omnipotent mind must confine itself to the conditions of the self-imposed law, else God becomes the destroyer of his own creation.

All means having been ordained, and all life brought forth as a revelation of his own power and glory, it is impossible to conceive that his will can ever come in conflict with his own plan, since his wisdom is omnipotent.

The forces of creation are so balanced and harmonized that they always tend from seeming chaos and confusion to great glory and magnificent exhibition of power and wisdom.

No human mind loses anything by the radiations that it throws off—the thoughts that it evolves out of itself only increase its own power *to think*.

Yet every good or great thought that is dropped where it can take root in another mind may be helped on by that new mind to a larger and better conception of itself: be again thrown off into another receptive mind and again increased in power and beauty, and so on indefinitely.

It is only a simple thought, thrown off from a working mind, yet it becomes vast and perhaps of power to move and sway many souls after enough successive stages of progression through mental activities.

I have taken this *thought* of which I speak, for as good an illustration, perhaps, as I can find of what you may call evolution—the workings of the spirit upward.

For this is a purely spiritual thing of which we speak; there is nothing in animal or vegetable life strictly analogous to it. Still, for aught we know, this upward working spirit may begin as a life principle away down in the lowest forms of vegetable life, and so on upward through lower to higher animals, till it reaches man—there is nothing apparent to contradict this theory, and much to support it; yet *we cannot trace it*—this individual spirit—till we find it as it first begins its workings in the human babe.

Then, indeed, may we trace its development and accumulations of force within itself, through its career in earth life; mark its *evolutions* into the next sphere or condition of existence; witness its increasing energies and abilities, through new and generally better and

more favorable conditions for development; mark again, after it has exhausted for itself the second condition of existence, its *new evolutions* into angel, and again after time (which loses its limit to mental consciousness now) into higher angel, and higher and higher—dependent only upon the height to which we have ourselves attained, whether the ladder reaches in its successive rounds on upward to Infinity itself, or whether the God-mind to which we owe our existence and conditions of existence is also ever progressing, and thus receding from us, we have no means of determining.

As you judge a man by his actions, and what you can perceive of the moral and mental conditions through which his actions work, so can we judge of the Omnipotent only by what we can perceive of his laws, and of the tendencies of the higher types of his creation.

There is much argument in the spheres, and much to support either theory, that the Infinite mind keeps steadily in advance of all his myriad train of followers by ever-accumulating force and development within himself, just as we develop or evolve and roll onward; and contrary: that his mind is fixed, immutable, unchangeable, undeveloping, self-sustaining, as he has fixed the suns in their systems.

But it seems to me these arguments are not profitable to dwell upon. The most desirable things for us to find out are the things most conducive to our most symmetrical and perfect unfolding in the stage of existence in which *we are*.

If we can only take up from the soil in which we are growing the attributes most necessary to our individual and peculiar development, when we make our evolutions, there will be no looking backward, no withering blight of regret to outgrow, no mildew of prejudice to wipe out, no pains of conscience to endure, when we look into the clearer mirror of a new existence.

And the one who thus gains the most increasing energy, with the least to retard his upward tendencies, leaves far in the wake those who take with them mental burthens from one stage of existence to the next.

Truly the kingdom of heaven is within you; and never hope or expect to gain it without the circle of your own individual spirit.

He who is miserable and complaining on earth will be miserable and complaining in his next stage of existence until he has developed a self-poise that is self-sustaining. And he can never progress *beyond* that next stage nor into all of *its* best conditions, preparatory for the new evolutions of spirit life, until he has developed such a self-poise.

The successive developments being now purely spiritual, of course the evolutions depend upon his mental (or soul) health, as on earth it is determined by the condition of his body.

Labor, then, in your earth life for that mental poise of peaceful equanimity and loving charity and helpfulness toward others that may give you even on earth that state of heavenly kingdom that will afterward elevate you to a more rapid evolution onward through the spheres.

ARTICLE IV.

QUESTION.

What is the Will?

ANSWER.

WHAT is God? He is the Will of the universe, as he is the Light of the world. *That which can create.*

The light, the warmth, the electricity, the life of the world, are the emanations from that which creates and perpetuates.

Well, every human spirit is a child of the Father in a spiritual sense, as much as the child of the mother's womb is body of her body. The spirit of your child may not be akin to your own spirit so much as may be that of another child in the remotest parts of the earth. But you and your child and all children are akin to the Father in the spirit. The possibilities of the manifestations of the First Cause are illimitable, innumerable; and no manifestations of intelligence in the universe, however diverse, but have likeness and are related to *That Which* works over all, through all, in all. For were any not possessed of the spiritual essence of the Creator, there would be no life in them.

This spiritual essence is the intelligent Will of the universe. That from which all life comes.

Hence it is obvious that all intelligence in life is possessed of will. It is the *Will* in the individual spirit that makes that spirit what it is—that makes it exist at all: it is the life.

Because it is life itself it is so little recognized or comprehended by the possessor in the first stages of existence.

The growth of intelligence is like a little seed planted in the ground; as it puts forth one shoot after another, sensing in turn the circumstances under which it pushes upward (which is its soil) and the impressions which it receives from contact with other life about it (which are the air and moisture that help or retard its growth) the young, struggling shoot of humanity is too busy sensing its own evolutions to pause to feel or strive to understand the will within itself that pushes it on and on.

Gradually, as it reaches more advanced stages of existence, it begins to realize the sensation *I am*—it perceives dimly that by force of its own inalienable life it may *cause*.

It feels, as it senses more and more its own selfhood, that it may affect other individuals less developed in consciousness of individuality, of power, of will.

Certain emanations of will, conscious or unconscious, of an individual are what has been termed animal magnetism.

One of its *directed* emanations you have called mesmerism. (These are emanations acting upon other

will.) When the emanations of the great *Over Will* acts through or upon inanimate things it is electricity, it is light, it is heat, it is motion, it is force, in differing effects. But it is always *The Will* that is working through them.

You say there is electricity in your hair when it crackles as you brush it. It is the life, the emanations of the will of your spirit, that makes your body alive, that causes it to crackle. Dead hair will not do so, unless, possibly, it may if it has been worn long enough upon a living head to have imbibed these living emanations.

Thus we may say, that which is alive is that which possesses will force to cause or produce effects.

That which is devoid of life may be caused to act, but has no power to act *within itself*.

Thus there are the two great primal forces. The *Cosmos Force*, which is the force of *undeveloped unintelligent* matter; it is a force that is caused by action of the Odic Force; it is a force that is delegated, that could not exist without a cause. The *Odic Force* is the force which *can cause*, hence it is a force of intelligent will, of reason, a force of conscious spirit action.

The *action* of the Odic Force is all we know of God.

But remember, we as the direct spiritual offspring of God possess, each one of us, an indestructible germ of this Odic Force, this will power, a germ of which every seed is typical, inasmuch as each perfect seed bears within itself all the possibilities manifested by the parent from whence it was produced, and which possibilities need only time and proper conditions to develop.

The tree loses nothing by the seeds which naturally fall ; they are merely excesses of its own vitality. So we may suppose the great I AM loses nothing of force, or possibilities, or power, by endowing us, his spiritual children, continually being born into the world, with this will force, or by constantly perpetuating the Cosmos Force, which he has caused.

So far as we know we differ in the possibilities of our spirit nature from God most in this: Not one of us can create a germ of life—can create one atom of the Odic Force, which is behind all force.

The earthly father and mother may create the other parts of their child, but the life germ comes directly, we suppose, from God. Although the parent may affect or make impressions upon the unborn will of the child, as by mesmerism grown wills are affected, or as impressions are made upon the yielding mind in childhood, yet no impression can be made which may not *in time be eradicated*, and the individual spirit or will become pure and true to the great principles of purity and truth as they exist in the mind of God. As they are crystalized and polished, and made more perfect, they resemble more and more the Father, as drops of water are like the fountain from whence they fall.

ARTICLE V.

QUESTION.

Is the sun the great center of the electric forces of its system; and of this will force as well, a center?

ANSWER.

THOSE belonging to earth have to do but with the laws and the forces of earth, save so far as a knowledge of outside influences may further their perceptions of the infinite love and wisdom which rules all things. Your world is influenced and held to its action by forces of the sun as a controlling motor.

The highest laws of mechanics are used in the constructive mechanism of the universe.

As a crude illustration, compare the universe to a watch; your solar system may be compared to one of the wheels of the watch, its many planets the cogs in the wheel; the sun the center upon which all revolve. But remember it is only one wheel amid many—necessarily, of course, perfect in its motions to the finest breadth of space and the most minute span of time, that it may do its allotted work as a factor in God's infinite plan—yet it is no more than one simple wheel, as compared to the whole watch; and the finger which turns the key to the whole is God's.

The *will force* is in God and with God. *That which* is before and back of everything. His will is communicated to all, making each what it is.

But if you ask me where the will force centers—if its center is in the sun—I can only reply, the center of all will force dwells in God. *He* is the fount of life from which all life flows, and his the controlling energy of all things which possess energy or force of any kind.

Each thing in the universe, from the smallest to the greatest, is endowed by him and of him with the energy or forces needed to its work in the place where he has appointed it.

If your earth borrows from its sun, the sun in like manner receives from God that which it is necessary that the sun should lend. You, nor I, nor aught of the greatest planet, *hath* of its own; all is of God, and to his glory alone we are. But each individual soul is superior to the grandest planet in this, that it is an *inheritor of the Divine mind*.

Broadcast are scattered the seeds of life through all the universe. Each seed contains the power of development—of evolution—within itself: it is the principle of which it is. Indestructible are these seeds.

Finding proper conditions, they begin their evolutions, ever accumulating forces as they roll on toward eternity.

It is like a boy making a mammoth snow-ball by rolling it in the open field; every time he turns it over it grows larger in proportion to its own size. So the faculties of mind, through each successive stage, gain from that through which they pass in proportion to

their own development. After mind becomes man it has reached a development where memory may be retained, as well as a dim perception of the God-mind from which it sprang.

And, strangely enough, it is only then that rebellion against God occurs; in this transitional state of the soul, it is as if, feeling the spiritual quickening before the birth into the true heirship of the sons of God, the soul were loth to leave its slow, crude condition of mere cosmos force, wherein its odic faculties have lain dormant.

Nothing below man rebels at its appointments. And nothing above man (for earth-bound spirits are not above him) rebels, but delights and loves to do and discover the will of God.

This is why God so loves the world—so pities it with infinite compassion—when man in that state first struggles with his dim perceptions of good and evil.

This is why he sent his prophets, and his Messiah, and why he still sends his spirits of light, and will continue to send them till all of mankind be redeemed—that is, become fully developed into the perception and joy of being children of God.

This is why there is nothing in all the spheres so gratifying to souls of advanced spirits as being able to minister unto the souls of poor earth-bound ones (whether in earthly form or out of it), and lead them onward toward their glorious heirship into the kingdom of heaven. (You know Christ said, “The kingdom of heaven is *within you*.”)

This is why you should love God, and love to do

his will, *who first loved you*—loved you infinitely more with compassion than the most tender mother loves and guides her tottling babe.

This is why you should love your neighbor as yourself, to help him and do him no wrong, because thus you advance your own soul into that kingdom of love and peace which is not of earth.

This is why the witness of Christ's divinity is true, because of his knowledge of these eternal truths at a time when men on the earth were struggling in greater darkness and ignorance than now. And when the spirits of men, freed from their earthly form, yet found few rays of light to lead them.

It is true that he taught no *new* thing in his commandments, and the substance of the same thought is taught by all prophets of any people; neither can any spirit bring a newer or truer thought to man than the one incomprehensible, immeasurable thought of God's love to all that he hath created, and that we should love him, and love to do his will, that we may grow ever to be more like him.

As we acquire of his nature, so may we acquire of his knowledge, and thus of his power.

ARTICLE VI.

QUESTION.

*Are the different sciences taught in the spirit world?
And what is the system of education there?*

ANSWER.

EVERYTHING is taught in the spirit world that anybody *knows*. The law of *diffusion* is clearly recognized. It is fully known that he who has any real light of knowledge in him must give it off, where it will also benefit others, *before* he will be able to absorb any new or greater light himself. But *what* does an individual really know? That which some kind of an actual experience has taught him to be a fact.

Thus, what one spirit receives by way of education from another spirit he must go to work and *prove* in some way to be a truth before he can teach it to any one. Not that he doubts the truth of his instructor, but any truth is much like a prism—its shape depends upon the side from which you view it. One must see it from one's own point of view before one can accurately describe it.

The different sciences are taught. Yes; art is taught. Music is taught. Many things are taught

which earth minds could not comprehend. You have no earthly language in which to convey such spiritual ideas.

But what is most eagerly sought after and taught are the laws of spiritual development. Every spirit, as soon as he realizes that he is really to live for ever, wants to advance; as soon as the wonders and beauties of God's great laws burst upon his comprehension he searches on and on, with a longing and love that is never appeased though constantly fed.

And as he goes on he learns to transmit in some way every ray of light that he absorbs.

The sciences, or profundity of the laws taught, depend upon the spiritual plane where one is located, and the systems of education differ accordingly. But there are perhaps no what you would call systems of education in the spiritual world, save where children are taught.

There are centers of education for all sorts of branches of knowledge on every spiritual plane, unless among very low, earth-bound spirits, who neither realize their condition nor desire to advance it; but these centers of education differ according to the development of the plane upon which they are situated. All is adapted to the needs and requirements of the plane. You must not attempt to teach a child geometry before he has learned arithmetic.

But there is no compulsion about any education. Attraction governs everything. The spirit who has a great longing after music will be attracted by the melodious harmonies of some musical center upon his

plane of development. The one who earnestly desires to obtain knowledge of scientific laws will naturally gravitate to a center where such laws are discussed and expounded.

When he has absorbed as much as he feels he can hold he will in turn go out to prove the laws, perhaps to make some new discoveries. As soon as he has accomplished anything he hastens to communicate it where it is needed, then back to some great educational center again, or drawn by attraction, may be, to some individual, more highly-developed spirit, who as eagerly gives as he receives.

Thus, you see, the "general system of education" is one of attraction and diffusion. Everything is taught that anybody knows, limited only by the receiver's ability to absorb. These centers of education are kept up by those who are constantly going there to exchange experiences and diffuse their ideas. They are, in a sense, the tutors, those who come to absorb the pupils.

The tutors as well as the pupils are constantly changing, and this but makes it the more varied, instructive and interesting. It never grows wearisome nor monotonous—never falls into one particular channel of thought, as in earth schools, but is free, liberal and progressive, as is the realm of spirit itself.

And the widest toleration for differing views—the most thoughtful consideration of adverse opinions—is always given and received. It is for this reason, perhaps, that you may receive so many differing opinions through spirit communications.

A spirit is not afraid to present any side of a subject that seems to him true, nor to tell anything which he has experienced to be a fact. Yet when I say teachers are constantly changing I do not mean in a day, a week, a year, of your time. They remain as long as the attraction of giving or receiving holds them.

Several may combine and work for long periods to perfect some invention, to prove some new discovery, to discover some missing link in a *chain* of laws; but when any attraction which holds the mind loses its force through completion, the ever-busy spirit must on to new attractions and new fields of discovery and advancement.

There is no such thing as monotony or weariness among enlightened spirits.

Can you comprehend the joy and exultation of a mind that never wearies and never rests?

ARTICLE VII.

QUESTION.

On what general conditions of life here depend the soul's highest good in the spirit life? or, does the soul's highest good in the spirit life depend upon the conditions of earth life?

ANSWER.

THE soul's highest good in the spirit life depends upon the *development* to which it attains in earth life. Most certainly it depends upon the conditions of the earth life, but not, perhaps, as you may understand those conditions.

Man is three-fold in his nature. (This is an *old* truth, but a truth of any kind is eternal—never beginning and never ending; a *truth* old is yet ever new.) In man's three-fold development we find what is called body, soul or mind, and spirit.

It is not difficult for any intelligent, watchful mind on earth to observe the reactive influences of mind and body. The best health and development of the one tends to the best health and development of the other.

But there is a greater fact which too often earthly minds fail to perceive at all. This is that both the body and mind of a man (or woman) may receive a

very high degree of development while yet the spirit remains comparatively dormant—its development being very little advanced by all its earthly career.

Yet there is this: If the soul—the mental powers—has become highly cultivated and enlarged there are always great spiritual possibilities. It shows the strength of the cosmos force that is in him; and where we see evidences of a cosmos force we know that in just proportion to its properties the odic principle, or inner force, must exist.

This is a mysterious thing, and the saddest thing in all earth life: that a man may have mental powers polished, cultivated and capable till they are almost God-like in their power and mastering grasp upon the science and laws of nature, upon minds which are less developed than his own, upon his own bodily appetites and pleasures, and yet have less spiritual perception and development than the child who carries her apron full of flowers, her sympathetic eyes, her loving smiles, to some uncouth, bed-ridden unfortunate!

But you must not judge the man. His own spirit is yet small who dares to do that.

What earthly *mind*, by looking upon its fellow, can tell what may have been the environments, the crushing disappointments, the unfed hungerings for spiritual necessities—yes, and the pre-natal influences which have left its poor spirit room for so little development—which may have so stunted or warped it from its ultimate possibilities? The one great in spirit is ready to weep with compassion over the struggles, the sorrows, the stumbling, at the sinfulness of such a low-

spirited nature; but it never disdains, rejects, or relishes its sufferings. It longs to give plenteously of the light which it has been permitted to receive, and has its patience whetted by the sorrowfulness of the fact, that the other, so enshrouded in darkness, is unable to receive.

The soul's highest good in the spirit life, then, *does* depend upon the conditions of its earth life. But woe and alas! it cannot make its own conditions of life any more than the babe can choose of whom it shall be born.

But every spirit (as soon as it awakens to a perception of itself and its needs) may modify or advance its conditions. This is purely a spiritual matter. But each of the three-fold natures in man are typical. As the muscles of the arm are strengthened, hardened and developed by constant use so is the spirit advanced by its own efforts in the perception and rendering of spiritual things.

I do not mean now what you term "spiritualism" by spiritual things. I mean by its loyalty and truth to itself—to its conception of what is highest, and best and purest in itself; by sustaining itself by prayer, by the perception of God's spirit in nature as in man; by the influx of strength that flows to it from eyes that look into its own with gratitude; by the consciousness of its own unwavering integrity of purpose; by *any* of the various ways by which through different minds the spiritual man is developed.

So when you ask "on what general conditions of earth life depend the soul's highest good in spirit

life?" our answer must be, the conditions depend upon the mental status of the spirit which is to be developed.

The conditions of life which would advance the development of one spirit would retard another.

As the earthly mind can only find expression through the earthly body, so the spirit can only find expression through the soul or mind. Hence it is that the greatest mind gives evidences of the greatest spirit—when it shall have become developed. No very great, powerful, *well-balanced* mind ever found expression through a feeble, misshapen, imperfectly developed body; and no sweet, pure, inspiring spirit ever found its way through an ill-balanced, stubborn, arrogant, selfish, undisciplined mind. Thus you see the three-fold nature of man must develop in harmony in earth life to reach its greatest *perfection* there, and thus, when transplanted, to *be in* its "highest good" in spirit life.

Since this so seldom is, it is little wonder there is no more spiritual perception in the world.

It must wait for a greater development of the world. What one generation has learned advances the next. When man's mental powers have grasped the facts of what bodily conditions are best to his mind's peace and enlargement, and when he has subjected the body to the dominion of the mind, then will the perfection and perception of the spirit break through and govern both.

All Christian people know what are the fruits of the body and what are the fruits of the spirit. Let them practice what they profess to believe regarding the spirit.

And let those to whom the evidences of spirit return are more convincing, as to the truth of a future life, than all the spiritual truths expounded by Jesus of Nazareth, be careful lest they should become as intolerant and bigoted as any intolerance and bigotry of creeds which they affect to despise.

Let them not tolerate, in any sense, license in place of the law of morality in their own lives and purposes. Let them be just, charitable and generous to all mankind.

Let them so live in the light of the evidences of a sure future life as to convince, by the unselfishness and integrity of their lives and the loving helpfulness of their purposes, even skeptics that they are upheld by a conviction higher than the highest morality of the most cultivated mind, which depends for strength and sustenance merely upon its own powers of reflection and observation.

So the highest development which the spirit can attain in earth life is wrought through the good which it is able to accomplish in the world for humanity, the uplifts which it can in any way give toward a more spiritualized existence.

It may be through inventions, which economize labor and give more room for the cultivation of mind, in place of the hard, unending toil for bread. It may be in art, which enlarges the perceptions and often teaches lessons which no words could do. It may be in science, which opens up the labyrinths of different laws and truths to an astonished world. It may be in *any* way that assists mankind to a higher plane than that to which his brute nature would consign him.

But every person has it not, in the possibilities of their nature, to even approach such results. Very true. But every person has it within him, if he will, to be considerate, just and kind, and thus he helps, *thus* he sustains those at greater heights than himself, who are burning out their bodies to furnish fuel for their mind's action. Thus the father and the mother impress the seeds of righteousness in the mind of the unborn babe, and afterward teach the law of love to their children. People of the world are accustomed to attribute too much respect to the merits of the martyr. He or she who makes a martyr of him or her self to the whims or selfishness of another, or to the exactions of a cause, is thought to be great in devotion and unselfish in purpose. The fact is such an one is weak. No human soul has a right to exhaust or absorb all the strength of any other soul; and the man or woman who allows him or her self to be thus leeched upon merely lacks strength of purpose or of perception to throw off the incubus. He or she also wrongs the one whom he or she attempts to this extent to support.

You would not think of strengthening one limb by bandaging it to the other. You would know that both would weaken and neither gain. It is just the same folly for one mind to attempt to carry another—for one body to absorb into the selfishness of its own life the strength of another. Exchange of love, exchange of sympathy, and a helping hand to one who is stumbling or in distress, is a development of both soul and spirit, one that is reciprocal. But he who is able to stand—who is so selfish that he is willing to take from

another's strength—let him stand or fall ; even the fall may teach him something.

Let each individual have an independence of thought, purpose and action that leaves him always erect upon the lonely mountain top, above the jeers and tumults of a selfish, jostling crowd, and reflecting all the rays of light that fall from God's hand upon him.

Let him allow no human soul the right to make his whole happiness or his whole misery. That should lie between his spirit and its maker. It is the same with a cause. Every cause is unjust which would suck out the very life of its adherents. No one thing in life should be suffered to the exclusion of all others. There are many good and developing things in the world, and the apples of none are forbidden. Take, eat and grow !

Is your question answered ? Let each individual so adjust himself amid his environments as will produce the best three-fold development possible to him.

Yet let not him of the *one talent* be confounded ; let him remember of him to whom much is given much is also required.

The greater is as dependent in earth life for his daily needs upon the lesser as is the lesser dependent for his mental stimulus upon the greater.

No one has just cause to feel proud. The spirit most symmetrically developed and polished by the frictions of its earthly career is best fitted to enjoy and profit from spirit life ; hence such a spirit can go on more rapidly *toward* its "highest good."

What is its highest good but to approach more nearly its maker ?

ARTICLE VIII.

QUESTION.

How is it possible that God should be both a God of justice and a God of mercy?

ANSWER.

GOD is just in that he visits no exceptional punishment upon any soul which he has created. He is just in that he exacts of all that they shall, and has fixed immutable laws by which each individual must, *work upward* to his own salvation. Having fixed from the beginning these laws, which are exact, equitable and all-comprising, covering all the frailties and ignorances and blindness of humanity, he has clearly manifested his impartial justice in forming his laws so immutable that there can be no evading, ignoring or overstepping them by *any one*. They *must* be fulfilled, their conditions must be complied with, to the simplest factor.

No suffering, prayer, protestation or regrets—*nothing*—can exempt the one who has outraged the law from paying the penalty of that law. God shows no favoritisms. To each individual has he given perfect free-agency both to transgress and to suffer, if he will ;

but if he transgresses, suffer he must, and continue to suffer till he works himself, through his own efforts and the knowledge which the pain of suffering gives him, above and beyond the liability to fall into the conditions which cause suffering.

It is true that no one has freedom of choice of whether he shall exist or not; neither has he choice of the conditions under which he shall begin his earthly career—and those conditions have much to do with making man what he is.

But neither does God make a separate and personal choice of the conditions in which a particular human soul begins its existence. God works only by *law*. He ordains a law by which the spirit germs (begotten of himself) exist before they begin their upward course in man. He makes another law by which they are attracted to the human organisms that become, through still other laws, ready to receive them.

Then we have a human being, in the form of a babe. That babe contains within itself all the essentials necessary to the development, under forthcoming conditions, of man, angel and archangel—how much higher we do not know; the conditions, by unswerving laws, are always waiting his development; and by a beautiful, wonderful, incomprehensible law of divine adaptation by attraction the conditions, when considered as a whole—as surveyed from spiritual planes—always seem to have been the best that could have possibly been for the best development of that particular and individual spirit germ.

For spirits differ as much in their possibilities, even

in their embryo life, from each other as do the seeds of the vegetable kingdom. There are infinite shades of mystery and beauty in their laws of attraction and repulsion which infinity alone can fully comprehend.

Thus, then, God is manifestly just. How is he merciful? *Not* in permitting one individual, or a score of individuals, to evade some law. Not in making some especial exceptions, by elevating some individual through other than his own efforts: that would not be just. Neither does God suffer himself, nor allow the sins of any particular race of humanity to be expiated and atoned for by the sufferings of one particularly beloved and sinless son, even Christ Jesus: that would be unjust.

But God is most lovingly and infinitely merciful in that he never forgets, nor ceases to have compassion upon, the undeveloped spirits, struggling through the darkness of ignorance and the weights of the flesh, and other environments, toward the light which he himself sheds through the universe.

And as most convincing and comforting proof of his continued thoughtfulness and loving mercy he sends *revelations*, which shine out like a beacon light to a storm-tossed vessel at sea; like a lantern held before one walking upon a rugged path in a dark night, to show him the way to avoid its stumbling places (and these revelations are through a higher, more mysterious law than are the more common general laws which govern). But as "the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb," so must the light be tempered in its brightness and volume to the particular development

of the race of clay-enveloped spirits whom God would lead through these especial out-pourings of spirit.

Far less was given to Moses to reveal than was to Jesus. In Moses' time the Jewish tribe could not have comprehended the law of love that Jesus taught; the law of Moses gradually prepared the people to be able to receive the Messiah's greater spiritual truths. But Jesus himself said to his trained twelve that he had yet much to say to them which they *could not bear then*.

You cannot find a race in the world that has not had, in one way or another, its revelations. The nature and extent of these revelations depend always upon the peculiarities and the development of the race of people to whom they come.

And every revelation has the same tendency to *uplift*, to develop the spirit toward its natural and divine heirship. The ignorant heathen worshipping his wooden gods obeys a perception, however dim, of man's dependence upon a power without himself, whose mysteries he cannot hope to define. And a channel of thought once opened up is like a furrow plowed from the sea to irrigate the soil—the waters widen and deepen the rut through which they run till in time that rut may become the mighty river.

But you must not forget that God never hurries—that his patience is never exhausted—that his duration of time never gives out. All is accomplished slowly but surely by the processes of law—of development. All is perfect harmony; perfect unity are the purposes and laws of the family of God. It takes years, on years

in the world to develop the minds of mankind up to the comprehension of a new revelation. As soon as any great number of human minds are fitted to receive, the revelation is always given.

God is more merciful than any human mind can comprehend—he has given man *eternity*, if he needs it, in which to work out his own salvation.

Suppose God had made man perfect in the beginning, and avoided for him all this effort and stumbling; what greater thing would he then have been than a flower, a beast, a world? He would have simply been such a thing as God made him—nothing more—no virtue in himself, no possibility of ever becoming greater than the thing which he was at first created.

But God endowed man a *living soul*—endowed him the offspring of his own undying spirit!—endowed him, too, with all the possibilities necessary to develop to a comprehension of *Himself*. Made him spiritually “in his own image,” in that he gave him personal freedom and free-will and the inherent power of evolution outwardly from his own individual life germ.

All the merciful tenderness of a watchful and loving parent he shows in the revelations, the continual light, that he sheds downward through every grade of spiritual life to help him onward. The higher spirits develop toward God the more they turn backward to shed the light which they have received.

It is a law which should be better understood and practiced in the world, for each individual's good, that he who hugs selfishly to himself any great truth or knowledge that has helped to elevate his mind above

the brute of his nature will not be able to progress beyond what it is till he begins to give off, for the benefit of others, that which he has.

Christ's injunctions of love one to another were in accordance with this law. Christ came to the world not to appease any wrath of an unmerciful God, not as an atonement for a sinful world, not to save any man from the inevitable result of his own sin—but he did come to save him from the dread and horror of the grave: to *reveal* to him a purer and better existence beyond that grave; to reveal to him all he could comprehend of God's love and mercy; to reveal in his own spiritual body a living, tangible witness of the spiritual future of which he taught.

He came to bring "tidings of great joy," in that God's blessed spirit is everywhere waiting to guide and uplift the weak and trembling spirit that is ready to receive its impressions. He came to save man from sin and suffering through man's own love nature when it can comprehend the glorious truth that God first and always loves him. He came to teach of the law also—to tell to man the inevitable result of "reaping as he sows." It was necessary that he should suffer and die, not for an atonement but for a revealment; to make a strong impression on men's minds and to reveal himself to them afterward and clinch the fact of a spiritual existence in the minds of his followers.

If this one fact could be fully received into every human being's mind, together with the truths which he taught, that through prayer strength of spirit is given to overcome man's lower nature, by will of the

higher, the *world would be saved indeed*—saved in the very sense in which Christ came to save the world from its sins.

Let every man know that just what he *is* determines the spiritual plane upon which he stands in any state of existence; let him know that everything in his development depends upon his own efforts, and let him understand with what charity, love and mercy God, and even every being upon a plane *above* himself, is ready and anxious to give him all he is *capable of receiving* of spiritual aid, and the innate love of light that is in even the lowest mortal will glow and diffuse its warmth through his whole being and impel him toward his salvation.

There is no such possible thing as a soul's being totally lost. It may be at a standstill for ages, but there is always eternity ahead. There is no entire misery nor unalloyed happiness for any soul in its progressions; but the degree of either depends upon how much of a comprehension of God's justice and mercy the individual has arrived at.

ARTICLE IX.

QUESTION.

*Why does every nation have some idea of a future life?
and do different nations entertain similar views re-
garding a future life?*

ANSWER.

EVERYTHING has its genera and species, each specie its own distinctive and peculiar development.

This is from a law of diversity, which tends to greater harmony. The whole universe might be compared to an instrument upon which an anthem is played, each measure depending upon its own key-note for its volume and sweetness.

Each specie, from its particular place in the measure, has a peculiarity of development all its own. Every key of the instrument is not struck with the same power by the hand of the Almighty; if it were, there would be but a succession of monotonous notes—no melody—no harmony.

The perfect performer makes no mistakes in the measures he produces, but interprets his own thoughts clearly in the composition of his melodies.

Every race has its distinctive features, dependent

upon its higher or lower place in the scale of development. According, then, to the development must the mental powers of comprehension be. According to the development of the race must be the revelation to the race of life as existing both on the earth and in future states.

“Why does every nation have some idea of a future life?’ What is man placed in the world *for*? It is for a beginning of development, just as the seed of the tree is planted in the soil of the earth that it may begin a development of *its* possibilities, which it does with every little rootlet that it puts forth. Now, what kind of a development that man can obtain from the conditions of earth helps him most? Not a merely physical one, evidently, since the earthly body is dropped as a shell—is of no more lasting consequence than is the clothing necessary to preserve that body in health while it lasts.

The development, then, that is vital with any human soul is that which goes onward with him through eternity. How can any conception of the spirit that is in man—the principle that is greater than his outward, visible, material body—be gained save through some idea, however vague, of an existence beyond the earthly life?

It is obvious, then, *why* such a conception is in some way revealed to all races of mankind as soon as they are able to receive it. No people ever reach a development and remain at a standstill waiting for a revelation. The revelation is always waiting the development of the people to a full comprehension of it, always

something for their minds to *work up* to; and an understanding of morality precedes that of any great spirituality.

Certainly different nations do not and cannot entertain the same views in regard to a future life, though there may be points of similarity. A rude and barbarous nation could not comprehend the spiritual thoughts of a highly cultivated and Christianized one; nor could they occupy, on the spiritual side of life, the same plane of existence.

It is with the race as with the individual; the most highly developed minds are most capable of comprehending existence, and they always lead those behind them in perception and reflection. Confucius and Buddha no doubt served their races as well in the revelations desirable for the elevation of the then peculiar development of the race as Moses and Jesus served theirs.

God works through ages. What a nation learns in one age is a transmitted knowledge, an uplift to the next age. And the light, the advancement of knowledge, of one nation spreads itself as gradually, as surely, to all nations of a world.

Do you wonder? What of the nations that are or were so far behind—that reach the spiritual life in such darkness of ignorance? Well, they are progressing too. There are no false notes in God's harmonious measures.

To the individual, because he can feel his own pains, can realize his own aspirations and environments, there may seem to be many jars—chords that grate on his

mortal ear—but this is only because he is still in a low state of development, because he possesses so little knowledge and perception of the vastness of the creation of which he is an atom.

When he realizes that his own good, his own advancement, is assured along *with* the number of which he is a factor, then the law of brotherly love, and thus love to God—obedience to the law of God—is assured; he is beyond the law then; he has no further need of the law of command, such as was necessarily given through different revelations to different peoples of the world, because his own desires, his own will, leads him always to rejoice in helping to further the law.

ARTICLE X.

QUESTION.

Where was the Garden of Eden?

ANSWER.

EVERYTHING material, moral or spiritual is impressed upon the mind through its perceptions of opposites or contrasts. Light and dark, heat and cold, virtue and vice, pleasure and pain, are contrasting entities, without one of which the other could form no impression.

The New Testament is the best interpreter of the old. Paul says (Rom. v, 14), "Adam is a *figure* of him that was to come." Without a perception of man's sensual estate, as portrayed in the figure of Adam, a conception of his spiritual possibilities, as revealed through the nature and character of Jesus, could not have been impressed strongly enough upon the mind of man to give it an impetus to action and imitation.

And it is by the impressions made upon the consciousness that the soul, which clothes the spirit and becomes the arisen spiritual body, is developed within the "temple of clay" through which the life-giving spirit acts in earth life—controlling, yet subject to it.

The mind, growing with its experiences, is molded

both from impressions through the outer or physical man and through consciousness from the inner or spiritual man.

But, of course, the physical impressions are much the more strong and vivid in the beginning, and form a framework, as it were, upon which the more subtle spirit impressions may accumulate, because the spirit is weak, through its associated but unassimilating condition with matter, and cannot act freely or forcibly till rid of the opposing material body and clothed in its own adaptive spiritual body. Where the soul is malformed by excess of, or improper, physical impressions it must be healed by a more perfect understanding before the spirit can advance in it. Yet there is that about the very material elements composing the physical body necessary to give the strength and will power of control over lower forms, and vivid conception to a degree of greatness such as may constitute a spirit of God's creation— a son "in his own likeness."

Thus you perceive the value of a long life on earth, even under adverse conditions. As all things were made of God, and "without him nothing was made that was made," it follows inevitably that the qualities of matter itself are inherent in the Divine mind.

Yet the very qualities which appear evil and opposed to good in their first warring of opposing entities, by which soul-forms are evolved, may, in an assimilated, perfected state, such as that in which the Divine mind *must exist* (since all his laws, however diverse and opposing, tend to wholesale harmony), prove only qualities of wise, unimpeachable goodness.

Adam was a figure of the carnal man, subject to the temptations of physical appetites, ungoverned by higher faculties which give him self-control and restraint.

He who subjects any knowledge he may have of right and wrong to bodily desire also becomes the moral coward, representing timidity and falsehood, that Adam was.

The serpent is a figure by which is represented desire, and the arguments with which reason will be persuaded by the passions clamoring for their indulgence.

What stronger figure could have been given than that of a woman by which a man may transgress? What thing under the sun does a man find it so hard to resist as the woman he loves, even when he knows her to be in the wrong?

The curse is a figure, too. By what patient and arduous toil of the *will* in man is it that the fruit of the spirit—the *bread of life*—is developed through the dark soil of the physical man, to nourish and sustain the growing soul! Naturally, there was no mystery or misfortune in early times so great to man's mind as that of death, for which no reason appeared to his mind save the wrath of an offended deity.

Understanding nothing of the spirit latent within him he could comprehend nothing of the death, to all intents and purposes, of that spirit when undeveloping, because of strong opposing environments.

The Garden of Eden, then, is an allegory. If there had been no figure of original purity (as of course the original germ of spirit *is* pure) in the allegory there would have been no perception conveyed of the vice of

yielding to the appetites of the flesh when opposed to the moral rectitude.

Paul says, "Adam is a figure of him who was to come"—a figure of darkness, by which the light of truth and virtue and rectitude, and all fruits of the spiritual man as exemplified in Jesus, are thrown into greater prominence and contrast.

But why did God endow man with so keen an appreciation of fleshly enjoyments and ever-recurring cravings for satisfaction, whose gratification begets misery and death (or lack of development of the spirit)? Foreseeing all things, why did he so construct his laws that there should be a necessity of the knowledge of good and evil in man's mind? Why did he form man essentially selfish, and place him among temptations appealing always to self-indulgence, when the fruits of such indulgence are evils to his spiritual nature?

Since impressions are made upon the mind only by contrasts it is evident that by such contrasts alone can the mind develop beyond the thing which it is at first created, and it is only by this sort of a development that a creature can be given *free will*—the power to discriminate and choose.

He learns from experience to love the light of truth and harmony as he learns to abhor darkness and its attendant miseries and loathsome horrors.

He who comes into a clear light of knowledge and understanding cannot be tempted to wrong-doing, to in any way injure others or himself; yet we cannot assert that to sin is merely ignorance, it is not a vacuity, it is an entity as well as is godliness. I should say it

is a quality inherent to the lower forms of matter from whence higher forms are evolved, the further they progress in enlightened and refined forms of matter the further they leave behind the influences of the dark, material atmosphere and substance in which the propensities to sin are inherent.

That first soil is the hot-bed in which the seed is germinated and puts forth its feelers. When you pluck the perfect fruit from the tree what trace do you perceive of the muck and mire in which the roots that started and fed it toward its completion were imbedded?

Ah! but you say every soul is not alike. One develops much spiritual beauty in its earthly life and passes on to an existence of enjoyment and reward, while another, from no evident reason but that God ordained it so, lives a gross, carnal existence, and finally suffers only misery and degradation when in another sphere he comes to realize himself *as he is* in the darkness of his own spirit.

You admit the sinful man may be an example to other men, and cause them to reflect and shun the evil which he so shockingly portrays, and thus good to others may result from his abasement; but the man who was fitted to be a vessel of dishonor—where is God's justice and compensation to *him*?

Your trouble arises from supposing that he who is what you call good finds existence after the change to spiritual life a very easy, an enjoyable, affair. Many calling themselves Christians picture to their fancies a lazy, unprogressive existence that would be as gross to the spirit as is an altogether sensual life to the soul on earth.

You forget that none is entirely good but God, because none other has all knowledge. We must believe that God has knowledge of good and evil, because he governs all things by such strong contrasts; but that he prefers the good because he leads the souls he creates always toward that end.

You forget that the more spiritual, the more filled with the light of true knowledge, the soul becomes, the more it loves, not some great, unknown spirit it calls God merely, but *all creation* in and through which God is *revealed*.

Loves particularly all of its own kind, with which the attraction of "like to like" brings it into closest sympathy and understanding. How, then, can a "good spirit" be entirely, or rather *carelessly*, happy, seeing others of its kind miserable, and knowing the cause of that misery and the remedy?

He may be happy *because* he knows the remedy. But can he be idle? Can he find time merely to *enjoy* to live, merely for the delights of sensing his own existence, free from pains and sufferings? Would not the moment he so fell from goodness as to conceive of such self-indulgence his torments of self-reproach and self-contempt exceed any sufferings which what you would call a "bad spirit" would be capable of enduring?

It is obvious, then, the very God-ordained law of his own nature, the quality of selfishness, which, less enlightened, begets injury to others, compels him voluntarily to *work* patiently, persistently, unfalteringly, for the elevation and development into the light of his darker brethren.

And he works with great humility. He perceives the environments which surrounded and retarded the dark one in earth life, witnesses the efforts and struggles of the suffering spirit to throw off the habits of character which still bind it.

He proves his gratitude for having escaped such sufferings by the devotion with which he lends himself to the aid of any whom he may find his *peculiar individuality fits him to help*. He cannot progress so very far—he cannot go beyond and out of the sight of his race in happiness and knowledge.

He must wait and be a teacher, a guide, to help them along in the path which he can perceive, leading upward, where all may tread, when the search has been made, “till all are found.”

If men in the world could realize this do you not suppose they would labor harder while upon the earth, through the development and instruction of children, and of the *fallen* everywhere, and save themselves ages of work in the next world, even if they escape such personal wrong-doing and misery?

For it is harder far to take a soul out of a rut of wrong thoughts and desires than it is to prevent him from falling into one, or to help him up when he first falls.

Do you think any one who should realize all this *could* push an unfortunate further down, even if he was in the way?

The story of the prodigal son is a good example of the rejoicing in spirit life over a soul that emerges from the darkness into the light. But the story does not go

far enough to tell what a hero the prodigal becomes for the conversion of those in the darkness, which he remembers in such vivid contrast to his glorified peace and knowledge, that his love to God and his brethren transcends, often, the comprehension of those born on the spiritual side of life who lack the vigor of will and wisdom which earth experience and influence infuses.

Thus all things work together for good indeed.

There is no limit to time—there is always eternity ahead and always new delights and possibilities to be found in every progression. We know God is good and loving, and will promote the ultimate good of all, because the nearer we approach him the more of all that is opposed to good and love must be left behind.

But we also know that upon our own individual efforts depends not only our own good but the good of our race, and even the race must pause to keep the race behind it following in its wake.

The spiritual planes are united so closely they are like steps of a mighty stairway, leading on up to mystery, glory, infinity.

And through all and over all the holy spirit of God is infused, more willing to give of spiritual holiness to any one who by desire places himself en rapport to receive, than the most earnest petitioner, longing through his prayers for the fullness of its bounty, is willing to receive.

Let all keep, then, the spiritual attitude of prayer, which is that of being willing to be impressed with the truth.

ARTICLE XI.

QUESTION.

Wherein were Christ and his disciples different from other men?

ANSWER.

IT is necessary to use some kind of a figure to impress a figure when finite words are too meager to convey a tithe of the richness of spirit thought.

(This should always be remembered when studying the sayings of Christ and his disciples. Try to understand not merely the words or figure employed, but the *spirit* which is meant to be conveyed.) Having understood previous articles, you will remember we found in the great center of all things, whom scriptures term Jehovah, the odic force which is the prime or first cause of all forces.

Now for a figure of this odic force, existing at its source in Jehovah, let us take a simple, clean fire of anthracite coal. As it glows and burns there it gives off several things, not one of which is a bit of the entire coal itself. There is heat: compare those rays of heat to the emanations of life from God, by which the vitalizing principle is communicated to everything that lives. There is light: let that answer to the emana-

tions of spirit which scatter far and wide the seed germs of spirit throughout the universe, and constantly feed those germs, always through the attraction of like to like.

The greater the development the greater the attraction, and hence the more rays of light that will be received (just as a highly-polished surface attracts and reflects more rays from the sun than a duller one). Then there is motion: consider this like unto the mighty emanations which produce the cosmos force. We have previously seen that when one of these seed-germs of light falls into the embryo germ of mortality, produced through conjunction of the attraction of the sexes, we have the miniature babe, with nothing more required but time for its development—*nothing more*. If it is never developed in earth life it will be in the next sphere to it.

Well, suppose, now, one little coal from that glowing fire had been dropped into the soul of the embryo babe, instead of merely the seed of light! Do you not suppose one such little coal—nay, hundreds—might be spared, yet never seem to affect the strength of the heat and light of a vast bed of glowing coals? (Remember this is but a *poor figure* of great power and glory.) How does anybody know but that by some incomprehensible law such a coal is sent, at certain proper intervals, to every world in the universe?

But if it is, how shall any being less than the spirit in the coal be able to reveal the fact? If we are not gods, to witness the workings of God *primo facto*, how shall we be able, from any knowledge that we can

have (which you remember is only what we have experienced), to assert a positive affirmative, more than a positive denial? But as we may be able to judge somewhat of laws which we cannot grasp, analyze or define by their workings, so may we judge of how Christ differed from other men by what he did, and the effects which he produced.

What other man ever lived in your world whose influence was potent enough to cause the chronology of time, as reckoned in the world, to be dated from his birth? What other man ever lived who aroused the amount of thought and discussion in the most intelligent minds of the earth that he has done, and does? What other man taught spirit truths so simple that the mind of the young child is able to grasp their meanings, and the little eyes glisten with love and sympathy, the sweet voice grow more gentle and tender from the spirit stirred and thought awakened in the young soul, yet truths so profound, so impressive, that not nineteen hundred years of elaboration and discussion and reflection has been sufficient to bring forth one-half the force and attractiveness and helpfulness of the *spirit* of the teachings with which Jesus of Nazareth expounded the mind of God?

Much more might be asked, but ponder well these three simple questions, then ask of your own soul, Wherein did Christ differ from other men?

As to the disciples, the purely human characteristics of the men show in all the examples given of their lives and sayings. But their spirits were enlarged and lifted up by the teachings and example of a spirit

greater and higher than their own. Just so may the minds and spirits of men to-day be enlarged and lifted up by influx of spirit greater than themselves, if they earnestly seek.

That was one of the clearest and most explicit teachings of Christ—the spirit which was left in the world, free to all men when he was gone. Not but that the spirit was always in the world—but it was not perceived of men, nor understood; and Christ asserted that *he*, also, was before the world began. If his testimony proves true in other things, have we a right to doubt it in this?

Does the incarnation trouble you? Are you able, then, to tell why, or how, or in what manner, your own spirit becomes incarnate in the body in which you are at present imprisoned? Can you tell when the life principle of your own spirit began? through what stages it may have passed? or if it existed before the world existed in which you are now conscious of living? If you cannot answer questions concerning your own identity, with which you would naturally be supposed to be most familiar, by what logic or authority can you deny Christ's positive statements of what he knew concerning himself? He also asserted that every man was a son of God by divine birthright with himself.

Would it not be wisdom to accept, in lieu of mysteries which you cannot fathom, this conclusion: if an ordinary man's spirit holds a cupful of the divine spirit, then the spirit of Christ holds a whole barrellful.

Many persons whose enthusiasm leads them to magnify the facts of mediumship, and those to whom

the spirits of their departed friends seem more than the spirit of Christ, satisfy themselves upon the whole subject by saying, "Christ was a medium."

Do any mediums, after they die, come back, without the aid of dark circles, or cabinets, and allow their former friends to handle their spiritual bodies and talk at length to them? and, also, do they partake freely of food with them? Does any medium dare to assert that he is one with God when he knows he is about to die? Do you know the name of any medium potent enough to keep dark, low spirits away from other developing mediums? Let any medium thus troubled with influences which he feels to be low or impure pray earnestly and persistently, in the name of Christ Jesus, to be delivered from them, then add his testimony to that of the spirits of light and truth, through all the spheres of heaven, who are ever ready to proclaim that Christ is very Lord, Son of God, and King of Hosts.

ARTICLE XII.

QUESTION.

What is the condition and redemption in spirit life of the one who was a wrong-doer in earth life—say, of a murderer?

ANSWER.

IT depends upon the condition of wrong-doing: where no wrong is intended no sin is imputed.

As in earth life one desiring to do the right, who finds he may have unwittingly wronged another, experiences regret and strives to redress the wrong, so the one who in the light of spiritual unfoldment finds his earthly influence among men had a wrong or corrupt tendency strives by every means within his power to counteract the influence he left behind him, by spiritual impressions, inculcating the right tendencies of thought. He is not comfortable in mind till he sees he has done something to appease his own regrets, and has witnessed some fruits of his opposing efforts.

Thus with the murderer who unintentionally deprives his victim of life. He devotes himself as soon as he is able to the amelioration of any adverse conditions of his victim outcoming from the deprivation of earthly experiences from which he was too suddenly

cut off. But the Cain who deliberately spills his brother's blood through hate—his condition is the most wretched that can be imagined.

While no earthly repentance can *atone* for the deed, still, if he truly repent in earth life it is a great help—then he has before him the light of a true perception of his own condition, and he is permitted (through his own earnest desire) to begin to work out his own redemption through the devotion with which he lends himself to the service of his victim.

Such a weary, dreary task! The ages stretching out before him, showing through their darkness but one light for him—that of the service which it is shown him he may perform toward his victim or those who were connected with him, upon whom his death may have had an indirect influence (through want and misery, perhaps) of depriving them of the spiritual development which the wretched slayer may perceive might have been theirs if his hand had not deprived them of their loved one, or if thoughts of hate and revenge had not been engendered in their minds through the dreadful shock and sorrow which they then experienced.

For there is endless difference between a service which must be performed to redress one's own wrongdoing and a service wherein the highest seems to stoop to the lowest, yet proves his spiritual altitude by the largeness of his love when he bends.

The willful murderer, who passes over with his soul seething with the passions of hate and murder, is indeed in "outer darkness"—the darkness of his own soul, which excludes all light. There are the "bad

spirits"—the ones who, imprisoned between barriers of their own willful embracings of evil passions and undesire of betterment, are necessarily associated with only those as evil as themselves in a spiritual existence, where only the laws of attraction regulate the planes of thought. And thus evil festering with evil reproduces evil in more hideous forms of thought than could be possible to a mind on earth, where, from the admixture of good with bad, the most evil nature is constantly somewhat toned and improved.

Now every individual spirit has an aroma as well as every individual of the vegetable kingdom (be it attractive flowers, noxious weeds or tempting fruit) has its odor. And there is a "thought atmosphere" as well as that every planet has *its* atmosphere, wherefrom the life pertaining to it draws sustenance, and likewise injury at times. The atmosphere of the earth will float miasmas born of its own species' decay as well as the health-giving tonic native to its growth and unfoldment.

The more subtle, soul-sustaining thought atmosphere is likewise capable of certain infections from the dark spirits which recede from light, in place of advancing in order of progression toward it.

These spirits of darkness, then, continually foster the evil influences on earth, while the spirits of light as constantly lend their disinfectant, health-giving influence to the earth, developing souls.

No spirit of evil can come near enough to influence an earthly inhabitant to his harm unless his thoughts and desires attract it. But if his mind *has* a bent to

delve in the darkness of error and sin, earthly workers may do far more to induce him to turn to the light than any spirits of goodness and love can.

He may be influenced on earth through his outer physical conditions—oftentimes his physical sufferings induce him to a different reflection, understanding and desire—but when the conditions of flesh are passed, and his soul can no longer experience bodily pain, there seems nothing to lift him to better thoughts and desires, and the spirit seems to lose even the rays of light which were once native to it.

What the conditions of such a spirit's redemption may be we cannot tell. If he be really so "lost" to light as to have no *desire* for betterment, the mind of God alone, which can know his whole condition and the reason for it, can know what may be his redemption, and what time in God's eternity it may take to solve it.

But we have no reason to say there can be no redemption more than that eternity can have an end.

It is not possible, in a spiritual existence, that the good should come near such evil—should even witness their manner of existence or thought. They could not help them, and there would be nothing to attract on either side.

But we have never witnessed such a soul passing from earth life; always there is a regret—always in the heart of the most stubborn-lipped wretch there is a consciousness of wrong, an appreciation of the good and true, that makes him willing to turn his face toward the light of improvement.

If he is unable to bear light from higher sources he

may return to earth to learn of those striving to be good there. His own influence is not good, since he is below those whom he approaches, yet the earthly one striving to do right protects himself by prayer—by the earnest wish of his soul *to be right*—from all such influences that would be malarious to his spirit; he has a sure antidote that is within the reach of every one.

But it is important that one should get the right start in spiritual development in earth life, else he cannot hope to do such double work as retracing his steps and ever catch up with those who, leaving earth in proper purity and development, keep steadily advancing toward the center of all light and holiness.

ARTICLE XIII.

QUESTION.

In the spirit life WHERE is the home of the soul? Jesus said: "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a PLACE for you, that where I am ye may be also." Where is that place—the home of the soul?

ANSWER.

THE soul of the butterfly, which shall become a finished, matured *form*, is as much concealed while it creeps upon the earth in the shape of a caterpillar as when lying dormant in its chrysalis; and it is as blind, but it has some senses through which outer impressions may be conveyed to it.

For convenience we will use the caterpillar for our figure, and let the chrysalis answer to the dormant state in which, for a longer or shorter space of time, the soul must lie in its transition stage toward its new birth.

For *not instantly* are the interlacings which bind the soul to its mortal frame ever broken.

Now our caterpillar can move about in search of food to supply the elements from which the new or true form will be builded through the metamorphoses

going on within him. So, as man moves through earth life, the elements are contributed through every emotion and experience of his life, as well as from the emanations from his earthly frame from which his soul—the clothing of his spirit—is builded.

There is not an act, a thought, or a loathsome disease but leaves some impress on the soul as well as does purity and cleanliness of person and motives.

This cannot be too thoroughly borne in mind.

Our caterpillar can *feel*. He is covered all over with bristling hairs, which are like papilla to convey intelligence of every touch to his perception; but approach him, menace him with a stick, he does not stir unless one of those feelers of his are touched—touched either by the object or by an unusually strong wave of air. And he curls up the same in the damp or in the rain.

When he has become a butterfly menace him again with your stick. Does he wait for you to touch him with it? He can *see* now as well as feel. As he wings his flight through the palpitating ether does life seem the same to him flooded with the warm sunlight, with leafy retreats and multitudinous sounds, as when deaf and blind he crawled in the damp mold?

Yet it is the same world; only he now is *alive* to it all—he has new powers and is free to use them to their fullest extent; and he lives upon a higher plane than does his fellow-worm. It would not be possible now for him to feel existence as he once did in his old shell! And if he could, through any one of those feelers made to sense outward things, communicate with his brother caterpillar, do you suppose the cater-

pillar could at all comprehend what a different life it was, sensed outside of his shell prison?

Does this figure convey a comprehensible fact to your mind?

It is the same that Paul meant when he said, "Now we see as through a glass, darkly, but there face to face." Jesus said : "In my Father's house are many mansions: *if it were not so I would have told you.*"

The apostles came from many different walks in life. They came not of themselves, but *were chosen* because of the fitness of their spirits to the work, which the eye of the Master could see.

Though they had the one essential thing of *spirit* in common, having so many differing characteristics each must have felt different soul-needs necessary to his perfect happiness when he entered into the promised reward for all his labors and sufferings on earth.

The mind of Peter, the humble, ignorant, but most faithful disciple, when its earthly mission was performed would require widely different means of development than that of Luke, the cultivated, polished and opulent physician! Jesus, recognizing these different needs, "*comforted* them" with the promise of different homes suited to the wants of each.

"I go to prepare a place for you," the Master said. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

Their *place* was to be "with him," or where they could communicate with his spirit, because they followed him and carried on the same spiritual work that

he began and revealed in his lifetime on earth. Do you think any would cease to work in the spirit life?

The *place* in the spirit world where a soul finds its home depends upon the spiritual status of that soul.

It is not the amount of earthly culture or knowledge that he may be possessed of,—not even his moral rectitude and works of charity and good will,—if such works proceed merely from a sensitive nature and unwillingness to witness suffering. Spirituality means *more* than this—it means the *obligation* which every soul owes to its Creator, *by which* he proves himself a true son of the Father in putting his strength, be it much or little, to the task of furthering the *good* of humanity, in helping any and every soul to recognize the spirit of God within himself, and in witnessing the glory of God in every creature and creation that he has made.

For God's glory consists in his creations. And the only possible way of serving God is in helping on the triumph of the good in all creation partaking of the odic force, or will, till all opposing the good is eliminated from every individual spirit to God's eternal and everlasting glory!

But in the place or plane upon which the spirit may be located, to which he gravitates by the poise of his own equilibrium, there are many mansions indeed,—different localities, as there are on earth, where every spirit's mind may be fed according to its development and capacities.

Some souls hunger through all their earth life for some want of their intellectual powers, or of their affec-

tions, which circumstances do not allow them to fill. Such a want is like a missing stone in a foundation, it must be supplied before the superstructure can be builded. No outer circumstances fetter the spirit in the spirit world.

Its condition depends upon what it carries within itself, and it is attracted to the sources which will supply the want it feels. For the spirit is a thought world.

Souls develop and gain in strength and grandeur by the knowledge which they acquire of *all things*.

But whether he be high or low, first or last, in *place*, depends upon the spirit—the light that is within him; as if you place different liquids in a vessel the most volatile will rise, the heaviest sink to the bottom.

Thus some very gifted and nobly cultivated souls will be found upon comparatively low spiritual planes, while those possessed of quite little knowledge of the universe or of its laws (as frequently will those who passed to spirit life in embryo or babyhood) will have their homes or *true place* high in the gradation of spiritual life. They may be able to transmit much spiritual light, too, yet be so wanting in wisdom and will (which comes of knowledge) as to wield little power on their own plane.

But the great soul possessed of the small, undeveloped spirit upon the low plane is not an entirely contented or happy soul, because he feels his faculties always constrained and restricted through the dimness of his own *spiritual* perceptions. He needs more light. When he fully realizes this he gives up all else

and seeks for light alone, which may be transmitted to him, perhaps, by one far smaller in soul stature than himself. He must become very humble to recognize this and be grateful for such help.

Thus it is that of such—those who are become humble as a little child—are the kingdom of heaven.

And in that kingdom—the place of high spirituality—all are happy entirely, because there is plenty of light by which they can view all things in peace and joy, knowing all things to be right and good, and can progress continually without any hindrances coming from their own personality.

And you may perceive from all this that the “home of the soul” may change with the changes wrought in itself, through the eternal progressions of the soul.

ARTICLE XIV.

QUESTION.

Are spirits—departed souls—permitted to visit other worlds than this, and to know aught of their conditions and of the happenings there?

ANSWER.

IS it possible for you to realize that you are in a state of chrysalis—that your true self, your soul, is in a state of *being formed* within the shell or enveloping shadow which you call your earthly body? When it shall have become finished, whether it be completed as the gorgeous butterfly or as the homely gray moth, it will wing its flight from the realm of shadows to begin its growth in its native ether, where no shadows fall. Then begins the reality of existence. (But mark! the shape of an object may be computed from its shadow, if one knows from whence the light falls.)

Does not your own Niagara form a perfect shadow of its falls by a spray of cloud reflected high in the air? Now if you were in a balloon, and should pass through the cloud, would you observe its shape, think you, while passing through the cloud?

But you can see the shape of the fall of water and hear its roaring while so near that you could spring

into it. The water is a thing natural to your sense and perception. The vapor is not. You cannot hear, touch, taste, smell or see a cloud while passing through it: it merely obscures things to your view. You would never think of investigating the cloud above the fall to discover what the real thing, the fall, is made of.

Well, your dear old earth is just as much an unreal, intangible thing to the senses of a departed soul as is the cloud of vapor to y

Departed souls do not visit the earth—that is, they do not enter again into its *materiality*—to know of its conditions and happenings. They can see the souls of men within the clay while the clay itself appears more as a shadow or covering enveloping them.

Yet they can see you and your friend plainer than you can see your friend, though you stand face to face with him. Have you never looked into the eyes of your friend and listened to his voice striving to convey an idea of his thoughts to your mind, yet wondered all the while what was the idea, struggling behind the shadow of eyes and voice, which you strove to pierce with your senses, to find the real thing anxious to reveal itself to you?

Did you never yourself find words entirely inadequate to express the strength and shades of your feeling?

I say departed souls do not visit the earth. Naturally they do not! If time and development has not removed them too far from the attraction of old influences they may, under certain conditions, enter temporarily within the shadowy covering of an unliberated

soul (*without displacing the natural soul*. The moment the natural soul was removed or displaced the shadow would become untenable. What departed spirit ever seeks to reveal itself through a corpse, a discarded shell ?) and view material things from his state of existence through his dim glass of vision. Or, if skillful enough, a departed soul may weave for himself from corresponding essences a covering so similar to the earthly shell that he may reveal himself in it, and even see and hear and speak and touch and taste and smell through it, as long as he can concentrate *will* enough to hold it together.

Thus when you say you see the sun, the moon, the stars, it is not the real planet that you see, but you see its shadow of materiality through the shell that encompasses yourself. The clear light of the object itself, as departed souls see it, you could not bear.

A soul that enters the spirit life, till he gains a use of his new faculties, needs as gentle care as a new-born babe in your life.

Thus, you perceive, departed souls from earth can no more visit *other worlds* than they can their own—that is, the *materiality* of other worlds—to take on their conditions of life and see as the world-bound souls of those other worlds see from their own plane of vision.

And they cannot make for themselves a covering similar to the inhabitants of those other worlds (as they sometimes may like those of their native world), because there are points of dissimilarity between their own souls and those other souls.

Nor would there be attraction enough between them

and a world-bound soul of foreign worlds to hold them to the wordly condition sufficiently close for any sort of communication.

But the *advanced spirits* from earth may and do meet and exchange ideas and knowledge with spirits from other worlds. There is a universal spirit language where one is advanced enough to comprehend it, a language which is *reflection of thought*, no words, as you understand language, being used or needed.

The real or spirit homes of the inhabitants of other worlds may be visited, yet it is not a common thing, and one that requires the development of a larger power of *will* than may be attained in less than ages of thought and discipline. If a medium sometimes tells you, when entranced, that he visits other worlds, etc., he may *think* his soul is taken there, but it is not so: the thoughts from souls which know of other worlds are reflected upon his own thoughts and reproduced mechanically by his organs of speech to you. (As visions are given which are merely the concentration of thoughts or memories from an individual operating mind, en rapport with, and reproduced by, will of the operating mind upon the under receptive mind.) And you receive the reflection through, may be, a number of different minds. Do you expect the reflection can be exact?

If souls *could* return to worlds promiscuously what a confusion there would be of thoughts and ideas in your own world, generated from influences of spirits differing *in nature* from your own as one star differeth from another in glory!

But the nearer they advance toward one great source or center the nearer they must approach in characteristics, as rays in their conveyance.

When advanced enough to feel an attraction—to give or to receive—then they exchange with each other; but then they have passed so far from the attraction of their former worldly condition that ideas must be transmitted through many grades of mind, and refracted and lost in their passage more or less in each transmission, till the image given would be very dim indeed—scarcely worth the while. No; you will never be able to hail the inhabitants of other worlds through any medium clearer than your own telescope!

But there is much that you can discover of other worlds—as you see them—by your own powers and efforts.

The light that is given you to see by is the best for you in your present state of chrysalis, and if used to the best of your ability will be a priceless revenue to you always. And there is much for you to see.

Remember, you can find out in your present condition things pertaining to the *materiality* of *your* life and world which no departed soul can know from after experiences of his own.

There are discoveries made on earth which help to unravel the mysteries of laws whose workings are witnessed but uncomprehended in the spirit world! There is much in *your own world* to learn. The man of science who makes one discovery of an *actual* fact is as helpful in his way to his race, and thus a benefactor to all races, as is a prophet or a seer.

He, like all who are able to discover truths, whether material, moral or spiritual, is a *mediator* between the Divine mind, from whence all truth flows, and the creatures partaking of the Divine mind essence—of breathings of divinity, which require these discoveries of truth as channels through which their own soul waters may flow in their round of eternal progression back again to the fount from whose overflow they were started on their way—were breathed into existence.

Poets and artists are the second mediators which turn these truths in ways to present their different aspects to the duller minds of men. Following these are writers, and ministers, and lecturers—teachers of all kinds who enlarge and explain as their minds have received to minds which require such agitation to awaken their own perceptions of things. All have a use divine.

How often does a man say: "I desired to learn—to know of this or that when I was younger; but now I am so old—I shall soon die—I could make little use of such knowledge now—it is not worth my while." (Such a reflection shows how prevalent is the thought in the world that death will either put an end to the working of the mind or materially *change* its *powers* of working. A more correct appreciation of life *on earth* and *always* would do more than aught else *can* to hasten the millennium.) And feeling his bodily powers failing the man lets his soul become all covered over with the *rust* of *disuse*. If only such a man could realize that because his earthly time grows short the more he should make of it, with his maturer powers of mind to know, to discover, to observe, to compare, to

reflect, while he could still see, to *measure the shape of the shadows*.

The owl, perchance, sees gradations in the dark which eyes formed for daylight may not detect!

And a man would not fall into the dotage of old age, being merely a healthy animal with his powers of mind lying dormant, if he kept them bright with constant use.

The spirit, feeling more and more its new-born powers, would drop the old body as easily as a garment grown thread-bare is torn at the slightest strain.

ARTICLE XV.

QUESTION.

Is there any real benefit received from prayer, or does it merely produce a state of mental resignation ?

ANSWER.

IT is necessary to hold constantly before the mind the three principles of which man is composed before one can arrive at any correct understanding of such manifestations as they make their successive impressions upon the perceptions.

We will take these three principles, then, in the order in which they are most apparent to the earthly man: matter, soul or mind, spirit.

Now each of these three are entities—real substance—in differing manifestations.

On the earth you deal mostly with matter; that, to a certain extent, you understand.

In the next state, or “spirit world” (as it is called), it is soul or mind, as visible and tangible to the souls dwelling there as are your earthly bodies and surroundings to you.

But that which is behind and greater than both of these is spirit, and, unlike either soul or matter, whose

possibilities and powers of extent are limited, and which are incapable of forming a combination with each other by which the third principle, spirit, or any other principle than their own, may be evolved, spirit may combine with either matter or soul, and does continually, and by the interchangeable combination of spirit with matter, and spirit with soul or mind, the third principle is constantly evolved and perpetuated.

The spirit *world* is not evolved from the earth world, but the earthly is the result of the spiritual, as a shadow is the result of the rays of light falling upon an object. The reflection of the spirit shining upon the soul worlds produce the worlds of matter. Again, the combinations of spirit with the forms of matter evolved from the worlds of matter produce the individual souls who people the spirit worlds.

Thus, you perceive, the universe is produced from the mind or intelligence of God, combined with his *will* or life principle, which is the spirit.

But the children of God, which are greater than worlds, because possessed of *will* of their own, which is omnipotent, are developed inversely from the lowest to the highest.

But the inmost or vital principle, the spirit, is the *real substance* of honor and glory, that upon and about which all else is formed.

Now you know in what ways the physical or earthly body is developed. And I have before shown you, dimly, in what ways the soul is developed within the earthly temple: even how the soul may reach quite a commanding development while the spirit scarcely

advances beyond its germ state—its first life-giving power.

But there is a development for the spirit as well. And since spirit combines equally well with matter or soul, the spirit of man may develop just as well and just as rapidly on earth as in the next soul existence—what you call “spirit life,” which is a misnomer, for *spirit life* is everywhere equally. The difference is in individual spirits, of which you are one and I am one.

Having become an individualized spirit, that you must remain *forever* : eternity, which has no end, is all the limit that spirit can ever reach.

What, then, can feed the individualized spirit to its greatest development? Obviously, matter cannot, and soul or mind cannot, for both matter and mind are produced from spirit conjoined with either.

Now there is something more. Spirit cannot suffer loss. It can increase itself, but it cannot diminish itself.

In that it differs from matter, which may be decreased as well as increased, because it can be converted into something else. And mind also, may undergo change. But spirit partakes of the infinite, and is unchangeable. It may give off, may produce from itself, but can suffer no loss from such production. It is a quality inherent in itself to give off power to form other combinations from itself. (Without *life* there is nothing. You speak of dead matter, but really there is nothing but that is alive, only all things have not individualized life.) For an illustration of this giving quality: you give off something with every breath you draw (as well as with every thought you think)—some-

thing which helps to furnish nourishment for something else—something which contributes toward a different combination of elements that appear in a different form than your own, yet you sustain no loss by breathing.

But, you say, you also receive something conducive to your own formation by breathing !

Exactly. Nothing is lost. Every element that ever existed in the universe remains in the universe. Every form and expression of life merely helps itself to that which it needs for its own peculiar development from a continually used and thrown off exhaustless supply.

The spirit has its own peculiar supply as well as the soul and the physical body have.

Everything is from God, indeed ; and God's power to supply can never be diminished—is inexhaustible. But the individualized spirit receives its supply for spiritual growth from the individual *love* of God.

But how can love be appropriated to one's self save through love? Have you never known of an earthly mother who loved and yearned with unutterable longing for the confidence and love of her wayward, rebellious child, whereby she might help and show the child to a better manner of living, yet the child, infatuated with sensuous pleasures and blinded to their inevitable results of sickness or misery, avoided, and almost hated the mother, knowing her love and commendation could only be enjoyed by abandoning those gratifications of the senses which lead to ruin.

Well, it is something like this with prayer. He who prays from his heart to God must really feel a longing and a love for something which he fails to find, or to

be satisfied with, in the flesh, or in the workings of the intellect, else it is impossible that he should feel the impulse to pray. And when he thus turns to God it is not the mind but it is the spirit that is refreshed—and when the spirit is refreshed the whole man feels the inflating of the spirit. The spirit really receives a spiritual substance, an individual atmosphere of God, just as much as your lungs receive that which refreshes them from inhaling the pure air. Not but that the spirit always receives such an atmosphere to an extent, because such atmosphere exists in all things, but it received by prayer, through an especial and more direct law, which is susceptible alone to the will of the individual. God's common laws of spirit constantly act upon the individual to attract his will; but it is by the voluntary will of the individual alone that the fullness of the spirit which develops and uplifts his own spirit can act upon him. It is this that makes the souls evolved through the forms of matter the crowning work of all creation.

This need of The Spirit is the feeling of loneliness which every individual feels who recognizes his *selfhood* greater than that which comes to him from outward perceptions. He may not recognize what it is that gives him the feeling of standing alone in a universe crowded with life, but sooner or later he will recognize it as the attraction existing between his own spirit and God—a covered way prepared for himself alone, within which no other individual spirit but his own can ever penetrate. It is God's love calling him as it calls sometime each individual separately that is created.

ARTICLE XVI.

QUESTION.

What is inspiration ?

ANSWER.

INSPIRATION is that faculty whereby a superior intellect acting upon an inferior excites it to its largest capacity of performance in a given direction ; also, it is a faculty communicating ideas unknown to the intellect acted upon. Inspiration presupposes a superior knowledge both of facts and of deductive reasoning, and *arouses* a latent power of inductive reasoning in the receiving intellect, which causes that intellect to have ability to apprehend with his own individual powers the ideas conveyed.

It does not make a mere automatic machine of the individual receiving, because it requires in its action that the individual shall first apprehend before conveying through media of his own the ideas received.

Thus it is evident that it is a dual operation of intelligence, embracing both the conveyed idea from a superior and the native capacity of the inspired individual. And you will perceive the force and strength of the idea which the inspired writer or speaker conveys to other minds through his own will depend upon his

own power (native or acquired) of being able to give expression to the workings of his own mind.

Inspiration is truth; it is an exact reproduction of the idea received as nearly as the individual's power of conveyance will allow. The moment it ceases, in that sense, to be truth it ceases to be inspiration.

The superior influence exciting the mind to its best activity will prevent that mind from conveying a false idea,—or, to express it better, it is impossible that the mind, passively lending its powers to the influence of intellectual impressions without its own natural realm of thought, should produce that which would be false to those impressions. The moment it should try to do that it must begin to exercise its own natural functions of will in opposition to that of the controlling influence, and then inspiration ceases—it is then merely the workings of the individual mind, and nothing beyond the previous knowledge and capacity of that mind is received. Yet in so subtle and easily interchangeable an action of mental powers as this, it is almost impossible that something of the receiver's own individuality of thought should not creep in; and it is always certain that the native *individuality of expression* will be used. For instance: if the inspired writer be of a poetical, enthusiastic temperament, the language used and illustrative comparisons will partake of that character; if his mind be slow, sluggish, dogmatical, a more dictative, cold, unyielding round of sentences will be employed; if his nature be essentially loving and gentle the same ideas conveyed through his intellect will be distinguished by their tenderness and sweetness of per-

suasion to win other minds to the ideas presented. To illustrate: if you look at a bit of landscape through a blue glass, a yellow glass or a red glass, you see each time the same form of objects but their color appears toned by the hue of the glass through which you look.

Resume: Inspiration gives new ideas to the receiving mind; and it excites.

Now when it merely *excites* the mind to convey the desired idea by way of its own acquired knowledge or memory of certain things, it has merely to hold the idea before the working mind to arouse its dormant faculties of knowledge and memory, and to hold the mind steadily to its own work of production; but when new and quite foreign ideas to its own knowledge are presented it must first quicken the powers of the receiving mind to an apprehension of the idea desired to be conveyed, and sometimes this is impossible, because the development of the intuitional faculties is insufficient to receive the picture presented. I say picture, and I mean picture. Every thought in the human mind is like a picture. It is an assemblage of impressions which convey to the understanding what is really a picture perceptible to the spirit. (To the spiritual eye that can see the soul it is very easy to tell what that soul contains, for all past knowledge and thoughts are imprinted upon it as clearly as are pictures upon the pages of a book of illustrations. It is when an individual spirit looks into his own mind and discovers a picture long overlooked, though preserved there, that you say, in worldly parlance, "he *remembers something which he had forgotten!*") In conveying a *new idea* it is only

necessary to reveal a picture from the impressions living in the inspirer's mind to the receiver's spiritual perceptions, then excite the intelligence of the receiver to go to work and reproduce that picture in his own mind. But suppose his working mind lacks some spiritual qualities necessary to reproduce certain lights and shades of the picture presented! Ah, there you have it! In that case he cannot comprehend—"seeing he sees not"; the mind of itself, then, cannot reproduce the picture; nor can any outside influence stir up or arouse dormant faculties of his mind, *which do not exist*, to reproduce the picture, and the impression fails to be conveyed, *unless* the inspirer is able to *supply* from his own stores certain spiritual qualities which shall give the receiver the necessary strength to apprehend the idea. This may be done, and to an extent always is done. This is how an inspirational writer, or speaker, will often employ words and phrases of which he is ignorant of the meaning. True, they may be words or phrases quite current in the world, yet he himself may be entirely ignorant of them, because it is always as far as possible desirable to employ the words and expressions of thought common to the age in which the inspiration is given to express the idea, because most understandable to that age. (If the inspirer should happen to be a spirit who did not understand the peculiar language native to the individual he would in this case be obliged to employ help from some other spirit able to convey his idea who did. This would be more automatic, and more shades of thought would be apt to be lost.) But to supply *spiritual elements of per-*

ception wanting in the individual implies expenditures impossible to express to merely human understanding, and it is never done where anything else will answer.

If the truth can be conveyed by the natural powers of the individual inspired he is excited and sustained to convey it through his own effort and powers; and it is no less the truth than when new qualities of apprehension are supplied him. In either case his own effort of conveyance of received ideas, or the new spiritual elements supplied his mind, are of inconceivable value to the individual, because either excites and supplies in him a *spiritual growth* that can scarcely be promoted as rapidly through any other means.

It is one of the spiritual gifts coming most directly from the universal good spirit of God, because it is a reflection, from grade to grade, of intelligence, from the omnipotent power and knowledge of God himself.

Without inspiration and other revelations or influxes of spiritual nourishment there could be no progression toward divinity.

We, in our realm of spirit life, receive inspiration from superior intelligence, in higher spirit existences, just as earthly ones receive inspiration from higher intelligences, only, of course, it comes more perfectly and fully to us, according to our superior *spiritual development*. (Mind! I do not say according to our mental development. Yet great mentality will admit of a larger degree of spirituality than will small mentality. While much mentality does not necessarily contain much spirituality, much spirituality compels a growth of mentality in proportion to itself.)

What we receive we reproduce to others and from others, and by various means from class to class as new thoughts and ideas and inspirations are spread to all men gradually upon earth, from any source from whence they come.

But no soul can be inspired in any way whose spirit is not in love and harmony with the God-spirit of the universe. To be without the possibility of inspiration of any kind is to be dead to spiritual life—impenetrable to the light of absolute truth.

Inspiration is truth. It springs from the absolute fount of *what is*.

There *can be no inspiration of evil*, though men do speak of being “inspired of the devil.” A man may be *influenced* to evil—he can only be inspired to good. He also may be influenced to good. All may receive inspiration to a greater or less degree, and always to a *growing degree*, who, with earnest desire, seek to develop in the knowledge and love of goodness and truth.

It is not a gift reserved for the few, but falls free as the refulgent rays of the morning sun to quicken the spirit of life in every organized soul whose unlimited destiny is life everlasting.

TO YOU.

DEAR READER,—Now that you have gone through the pages of this little book, may we not express the hope that you have found both pleasure and profit in its perusal? And will it be presuming too much to invite your coöperation in promoting its circulation?

It may prove a beacon-light to many souls, tempest-tossed and struggling amidst the storms, the darkness and the confusions of earth life. Our prayer is that it may bring to all into whose hands it may come higher, truer, grander and sublimer conceptions of the possibilities which lie before them, and of the wisdom and beneficence of the plans and purposes of the Infinite, as displayed, when rightly viewed, in all his works and ways.

Progression is the destiny to which every human soul is created. The long ascending line from dead matter up to man has been a progress Godward, and destined to end only at that point where the two conjoined natures, the human and the divine, are harmoniously associated, the infinite height with the eternal in duration, the desired progression, beyond which progress cannot go, and in which is revealed true God and perfect man.

Before us there lie the infinite possibilities of indi-

vidual and of race progress. Before us still there is a progression Godward, and every human soul is subject to its immutable laws.

Let no one hinder, but rather help, that soul to mount the "shining stairs" to the higher planes of thought and life.

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